

High-speed internet access is critical to the viability and prosperity of rural communities. In South Dakota, broadband has the potential to be an unprecedented catalyst for economic growth and improvements in education and health care.

The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (H.R. 1), also known as the stimulus or recovery bill, invests \$7.2 billion in broadband to help spur investment in our nation's information technology infrastructure, grow the economy, and stimulate innovation.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration will consult with states to distribute \$4.7 billion of the funding to all parts of the country, including rural, suburban, and urban areas. The Agriculture Department will distribute \$2.5 billion through an existing broadband deployment program run by the Rural Utilities Service to rural areas without sufficient access to high speed broadband service to facilitate rural economic development.

A strong economy, including in rural states such as South Dakota, depends, in large part, on a robust broadband infrastructure. The funding provided by the stimulus bill will not only create jobs in the short term, but affirms our nation's long-term commitment to connecting all Americans to high speed internet service - including those living in high cost rural areas.

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